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SCIENCE

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CONTENTS

<i>The American Association for the Advancement of Science:—</i>	
<i>Some Responsibilities of Botanical Science:</i>	
PROFESSOR BURTON EDWARD LIVINGSTON	199
<i>Industrial Research in Ontario and Prussia Compared:</i> A. F. HUNTER	208
<i>Scientific Events:—</i>	
<i>The London Imperial College; Classification of Lands by the Geological Survey; Civil Service Examinations; The Committee on Grants of the American Association for the Advancement of Science</i>	209
<i>Scientific Notes and News</i>	211
<i>University and Educational News</i>	214
<i>Discussion and Correspondence:—</i>	
<i>Electro-thermo Regulator for Water Baths:</i> CHESTER I. HALL. <i>Common Numerals:</i> PROFESSOR G. A. MILLER. <i>Psychological Research for Aviators:</i> PROFESSORS E. L. THORNDIKE, KNIGHT DUNLAP	214
<i>Quotations:—</i>	
<i>The History of Influenza</i>	216
<i>Scientific Books:—</i>	
<i>Wade's Text-book of Precious Stones:</i> DR. OLIVER C. FARRINGTON	217
<i>Special Articles:—</i>	
<i>Pink Root of Onions:</i> J. J. TAUBENHAUS. <i>A Chromosome Difference between the Sexes of Sphaerocarpos texanus:</i> MARTHA A. SCHACKE	217
<i>The American Association for the Advancement of Science:—</i>	
<i>Section M—Agriculture:</i> DR. E. W. ALLEN	219

SOME RESPONSIBILITIES OF BOTANICAL SCIENCE¹

WHEN this meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of Science was first announced it was the expectation of all of us that our discussions and deliberations here would center primarily about the immediate and practical needs of a time of war. In those days the thought seemed common in this country, that it was the plain duty of scientists to lay their more remote aims aside for the time being and to devote their energies almost entirely to practicalities, the practicalities of those great martial undertakings whose wonderfully successful results have only just now passed into history. But it has become clear that the needs of a modern militant nation are not merely men and money; the ramifications of these needs seem to have led into nearly every cranny of human activity, so that almost every person has found ways by which his special fitness, for some activities rather than for others, might be utilized in this grand mobilization of the nation as a whole. In very many cases it has appeared that the more remote aims of those whose activities are primarily intellectual and spiritual are not to be laid wholly aside at the sounding of the trumpet of war and at the waving of the battle flag. It has emerged that most or all of those activities that may truthfully be called essential for peace and for the general advancement, are also essential in time of war. Details have required alteration, but the war has led, on the whole, rather to an acceleration, to a speeding-up of the majority of productive peace activities, rather than to the laying of such activities aside.

War differs from peace rather in degree than

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¹ Address of the chairman and vice-president of Section G—Botany, American Association for the Advancement of Science, Baltimore, December, 1918.